

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 05467 280642Z
ACTION NEA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 5467

STADIS //////////////////////////////////////

FOR SOBER FROM MURPHY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, SY, US
SUBJ: EFFECT OF REFUSAL OF C-130 SALE ON US/SYRIAN RELATIONS

REFS: (A) STATE 202397, (B) DAMASCUS 4270, (C) DAMASCUS 2789,
(D) DAMASCUS 2810

1. SYRIANS REMAIN VERY INTERESTED IN PURCHASE C-130'S
IN PREFERENCE TO ANY OTHER AIRPLANE INCLUDING FRANCO-
GERMAN NORATLAS, REF (D). AT SAME TIME, WHATEVER LOCKHEED MAY
HAVE HINTED SYRIANS ARE UNDER NO ILLUSION
FROM USG SOURCES THAT USG PREPARED REVERSE LONG-STANDING
POSITION AGAINST SALE C-130'S. IN JUNE 1976 USG
INFORMED LOCKHEED AND SYRIA THAT THEY COULD HAVE CIVILIAN VERSION
OF C-130, THE L-100. ON JANUARY 24, 1977 DCM TOLD ALLEN LOVE
OF LOCKHEED THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO CHANGE IN US POSITION.
IN JUNE AIR FORCE GENERAL MAKAYYAD MENTIONED C-130'S TO DATT
AND DATT AGAIN SUGGESTED L-100'S,
REF (C). COMMANDER IN CHIEF SYRIAN AIR FORCE NAJI JAMIL
TOLD NEWLY ARRIVED DATT, REF (B), THAT SYRIAN
AIR FORCE WISHED TO DEAL DIRECTLY WITH
LOCKHEED FOR PURCHASE OF C-130'S AND AVOID USG INVOLVEMENT
(SIC). DATT RESPONDED THAT APPROVAL FOR C-130'S UNLIKELY.
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IN SHORT, BOTH LOCKHEED AND SYRIAN AIR FORCE
QUITE AWARE OF OUR POSITION AND NEITHER SHOULD BE
SURPRISED NOR BADLY DISAPPOINTED. FURTHERMORE I DOUBT
ASSAD WOULD SEE IT TO HIS BENEFIT TO HAVE CONGRESSIONAL
DEBATE OVER SALES OF MILITARY AIRCRAFT TO SYRIA.

2. AGREE THAT TEMPORIZING ANSWER BEST POSSIBLE. AOTHOUGH

IT FAILS TO SATISFY IMMEDIATE SYRIAN REQUEST IT LEAVES HOPE
FOR CHANGE IN POLICY SHOULD POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS WARRANT.

3. LOCKHEED REPRESENTATIVES MAY BE ADVISED MAKE THIS
POINT WITH SYRIANS AND CONTINUE TO ATTEMPT DIVERT SYRIAN
ATTENTION FROM C-130 TO L-100.
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